



THE

# KNIGHT



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The LITHUANIAN Numismatic Association. Frank Passic, EDITOR.

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## LITHUANIA'S MILLINIUM

A series of three gold coin minted by the Lithuanian Mint commemorates Lithuania's millinium of the first know mention in a chronicle of the name 'Lithuania'. The first coin was issued in 2007, the second in 2008 and the third is scheduled to be issued in June of 2009. All three have a nominal value of 100 litai. All three are 99.99% gold, 22.30 mm in diameter and weigh 7.78 grams. All three coins have 'LIETUVOS VARDŲ Tūkstantmetis', meaning 'Millinium of Lithuania's Name', along the edge of the coin. The 2007 coin had a mintage of 5,000 coins, the 2008 coin - 10,000 coins and the 2009 coin will have a mintage of 10,000 coins.

The price asked by the Bank of Lithuania for the 2007 coins was 750 litai and 850 litai for the 2008 coin. Assuming an exchange rate of 2.6 litai per US dollar, this translates to about \$290 and \$330 respectively. Currently these coins are being purchased on ebay at considerably higher prices.



## OTHER SOURCES FOR LITHUANIAN COMMEMORATIVES

Besides the Bank of Lithuania, Lithuanian commemorative coins can also be purchased from a number of dealers designated as official distributors by the Bank of Lithuania. The frustration experienced by dealing directly with the Bank of Lithuania may be alleviated if arrangements are made with one of these official distributors:

**Šiaulių Bankas**  
Tilžės g. 149  
LT-76348 Šiauliai  
Lithuania

Tel: (8 41) 59 56 23  
FAX: (8 41) 59 56 39  
l.strikauskiene@sb.lt  
www.sb.lt

**Medicinos Bankas**  
Pamėnkalnio g. 40  
LT-01114 Vilnius  
Lithuania

Tel: (8 5) 264 4800  
FAX: (8 5) 264 4801  
j.juozapavicius@medbank.lt  
www.medbank.lt

**Trakų Istorijos Muziejus**  
Kęstučio g. 4  
LT-21104 Trakai  
Lithuania

Tel: (8 528) 53 941  
FAX: (8 528) 55 288  
info@trakaimuziejus.lt  
www.trakaimuziejus.lt

**Lietuvos Kolekcininkų Asociacija**  
J. Basanavičiaus g. 4a  
LT-01118 Vilnius  
Lithuania

Tel: (8 5) 212 21 92  
FAX: (8 5) 212 21 82  
galerija@maldis.lt  
www.galerija.maldis.lt

**UTS Taube+Stefan Fausel GbR**  
Georg-Eger-Strasse 13  
91334 Hemhofen  
Germany

Tel: 091 95 92 82 80  
FAX: 091 95 68 93  
eurocoins4you@onlinehome.de  
www.eurocoins4you.com

**Weka Munhandels GmbH**  
Am Lehenweg 11  
60437 Frankfurt  
Germany

Tel: 069 507 4539  
FAX: 069 507 4648  
wekamuenzen@t-online.de



BMV Mehlhausen  
Florastrasse 24A  
D-13125 Berlin  
Germany

FAX: 030 945 18635  
mehlhausen@snafu.de

Mr. Paulo Esteves  
Paulo Estaves LDA  
Rua Presidente Arriaga, 96  
1200-774 Lisbon  
Portugal

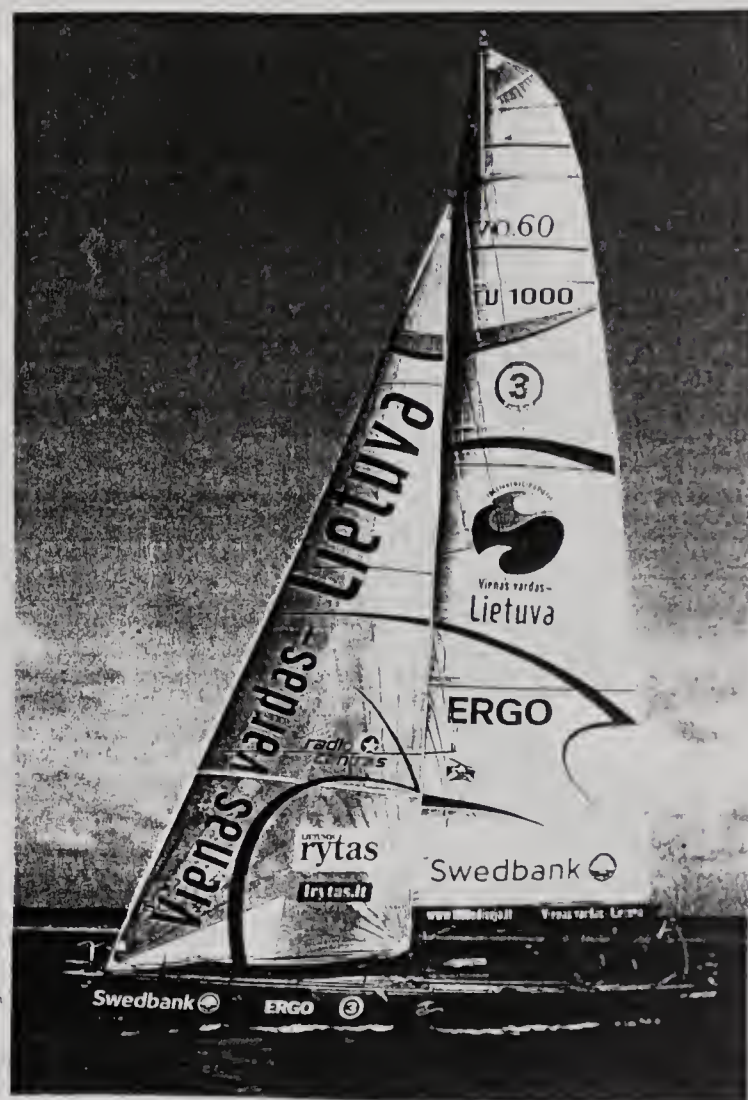
Tel: 351-212 466 856  
FAX: 351 212 466 856  
info@pe-portugal.eu

## 'THE KNIGHT' SAILS THE ATLANTIC

The LNA and our newsletter 'The Knight' had an opportunity for some unexpected exposure when the crew of 'Ambersail' paid a visit to the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington D.C. this past April 16 and your Director was able to pass out copies of the latest issue of 'The Knight' to the crew and their advance publicity staff.

As part of the its Millinium celebration, Lithuania sent a Volvo 60 class yacht around the

Marvin S.p.a.  
Strada delia Croce, 36  
47896 Faetano  
Republic of San Marino  
FAX: 00378 99 64 56  
info@marvin.sm  
www.marvin.sm



'Ambersail', the Lithuanian Volvo 60 class yacht which is circumnavigating the globe as part of Lithuania's Millinium celebration. Blazen on it's sails is 'VIENAS VARDAS - LIETUVA' meaning 'One name - Lithuania'.

the world on a 'The Millinium Odyssey'. The yacht and its crew are a worldwide ambassador of Lithuania's annivesary and they rally the world's Lithuanian communities on all five continents for a simultaneous celebration. The president of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, entrusted the crew of 'Ambersail' with the Presidential Flag to be carried on board the yacht and be displayed to Lithuanian communities around the world where the crew makes contact.



The Lithuanian Presidential Flag displayed at the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington D.C. by the captain and the crew of yacht 'Ambersail'.

The yacht left Klaipėda, Lithuania on 5 October 2008 for an eleven leg trip around the world: Leg 1 Klaipėda-Kiel-Las Palmas; Leg 2 Las Palmas-Cape Town; Leg 3 Cape Town-Adelaide; Leg 4 Adelaide-Melbourne-Sidney-Oakland; Leg 5 Oakland-Wellington-Punta Arenas (Chile); Leg 6 Punta Arenas-Buenos Aires-Montevideo-Sao Paulo; Leg 7 Sao Paulo-Martinique-Miami; Leg 8 Miami-Philadelphia-New York-Boston-Quebec; Leg 9 Quebec-Almeria; Leg 10 Almeria-Lisbon-Dublin-



London; Leg 11 London-Oslo-Copenhagen-Gdansk-Stockholm-Saint Petersburg-Tallinn-Riga-Klaipėda. Arrival back to Klaipėda is scheduled for 6 July 2009.

It was when the yacht was docked in New York that the crew and the advance publicity staff visited the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington D.C.

Thus, for the remainder of their trip back to Lithuania, the sailors and their advance publicity staff will be able to read the latest issue of 'The Knight' and become familiar with our Lithuanian Numismatic Association.

## LITHUANIAN MINT AGAIN DISTRIBUTES MEDAL AT THE BERLIN WORLD MONEY FAIR

The Lithuania Mint participated at the 38th Annual World Money Fair in Berlin this past February 6-9, 2009. There were 52 mints from around the world representing 42 countries and four private minters. There were also numerous numismatic dealers.

The Lithuania Mint issued a special small medal "medalet" for the event. If it had a trade value, it would be called a token. The medal was struck in cupro-nickel CuNi25 and is 22.65 mm in diameter, about the size of a U.S. nickel 5 cent piece. The medal weighs 6.2 grams and is about 1 1/2 mm thick.

At the center of the obverse is the 'LMK' monogram of the Lithuanian Mint. The top half of the legend reads 'LIETUVOS MONETŲ KALYKLA'. In the top half, both legend and monogram are in raised lettering, but the



bottom half is incused. The bottom half of the legend reads 'LITHUANIAN MINT'.

The top of the reverse depicts the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin and below it, in incused letters 'WORLD MONEY FAIR '09. These medals are identical to the medals produced by the Lithuanian Mint for the 2008 World Money Fair in Berlin, except that the date is '08.

These medals have been selling on E-bay for around \$10, plus postage. The Lithuanian Mint can also be contacted to obtain these medals.

The World Money Fair is an international bourse of coins. A bourse is where dealers, collectors and the public buy, sell and trade coins.

So as to build up a stronger market for collecting coins, A. M. Beck in Munich in 1970 founded the 'Organisation Europaischer Munzen-Borsen (OEMB) - meaning: Organisation of EurOpean Coins-Bourses. Two years later, the organization held its first international bourse of coins in Basel. With time it developed into the 'World Money Fair'. Now more than 40 nations are members of the organisation. In 2006, the bourse was held for the first time in Berlin, and the Lithuanian Mint has participated ever since.

## ON HERALDIC AND NON-HERALDIC DEVICES

Here is a Scottish coin of James III (1451-1488, reign 1460-1488) which offers not only insight into the visual language of medieval coins, but also is of particularly interest in interpreting our early Lithuanian coins.



x 2

The obverse of this coin, like many coins and seals of



medieval European kings, displays an equestrian figure. In this case the figure is facing heraldic left. The rider does not carry a shield showing his coat-of-arms nor does the steed's mantle display the rider's heraldry.

After considering many medieval coins and seals with equestrian figures, one finds that those lacking any heraldic identification of the rider face heraldic left. Such an orientation emphasizes the sword wielding right arm of the rider. The visual message is clear: since all know who is the rider, no identification is required, but his military power with the display of his sword is important. In contrast, when the rider does display his coat-of-arms, either on his shield or on the mantle of the steed, the rider is turned to face heraldic right so that his right sword wielding arm is in the background. Here the visual message is that the identity of the rider takes precedence over the display of his military power. However, there is at least one example where the rider remains facing heraldic left with his left arm crossing the chest so as to display the device on his shield to the viewer.

Of all the equestrian figures found on medieval European coins and seals, regardless of the orientation, none are displayed heraldically, i.e. enclosed in a shield. The only exception is the Lithuanian Vytis. And indeed, it was only the Lithuanians who adopted the equestrian figure as the coat-of-arms of its Lithuanian Kingdom and Empire and named the device 'Vytis'. Consequently, for us Lithuanians it is critical to know when the equestrian figure was first used heraldically on our early coins or seals, even though it continued to be used non-heraldically even after it's elevation to heraldry and given the title of a 'Vytis', meaning a hero, champion, conqueror, etc.

For comparison, consider the usage of St. George slaying a dragon by the English and the Russians. The device is very

popular in England, it has been displayed on the British gold sovereign coins for about 200 years, the chain of the Order of St. George displays the device, and the red Cross of St. George in a white field is the flag of the English Kingdom since the reign of Richard the Lion Hearted (1157-1199, reign 1189-1199). But, St. George slaying a dragon has never been enclosed by the British in a shield and was never the coat-of-arms of any English entity. In contrast, the Russians enclosed St. George slaying a dragon in a shield and became the arms of Moscow. Even though early Russian dengas display non-heraldic equestrian figures as swords weilding riders, as St. George slaying a dragon or a rider engaged in falconry, no one has or would ever suggest that these non-heraldic equestrian figure have any linkage to the later arms of Moscow.

Further, consider the devices on the reverse of the subject Scottish coin. The heraldic lion rampant is clearly the arms of the Scottish Kingdom and no further comment is required. It is superimposed on a long cross, which is also displayed non-heraldically and indistinguishable from long crosses found on medieval coins of many other European kingdoms. Although the cross of St. George was adopted by the English as the arms of their Kingdom, any linkage between this cross on the Scottish coin and England has not, and can not, be made.

For us Lithuanians, to accurately appreciate our early coins, it is critical to know the difference between heraldic and non-heraldic displays of devices. Further, we must widen our perspective and consider how other cultures display and interpret devices found on their coins which are similar to our. Also, besides the three devises adopted by Lithuanians as heraldry; the portal gate (Pilies Vartai/Gedimino Stulpai), equestrian figure (Vytis), and Apostolic Cross (Vyties Kryžius), we need to study the use of the imperial eagle by all European



cultures so as to accurately determine the changes in its interpretation by the Polish culture as a function of time. For example, how would period Polish have interpreted their use of the imperial eagle when it is displayed together with the arms of Lachia and the arms of Polonia? Or, how would the Piasts of Lachia, who had been designated Princes of the Holy Roman Empire and thus had obtained the right to display a black imperial eagle in a yellow field, have viewed as the proper colors in which the imperial eagle should be displayed by a foreign king forced on them or by one of their own choosing?

## A COIN DEDICATED TO THE DESIGNATION OF VILNIUS AS A EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

On 17 March 2009, the Bank of Lithuania issued a new commemorative coin designed by Vytautas Narutis to celebrate occasion Vilnius being designated as a Capital of the European Culture. The 92.5% silver coin has a nominal value of 50 litai, is 38.62 mm in diameter, weighs 28.28 grams and is of proof and mat finish. Along the edge is written VILNIUS - METROPOLIS CULTURAE EUROPENSIS. The mintage is 10,000 coins.



Also, 1 litas coins of the same design were minted in an alloy of 75% copper and 25% nickel. These coins are 22.30 mm in diameter, weigh 6.25 grams and have an edge rimmed at intervals. One million of these coins were minted.

On the obverse is the Vytis encircled at the top by LIETUVA and on the bottom by its nominal value, i.e., 50 LITŲ

and 1 LITAS respectively. At the 3 o'clock position is the logo of the Lithuanian Mint.

On the reverse is a muse, a spirit of creativity, drawing on an easel which is in the shape of the Vilnius Castle Tower of Gediminas. Encircling at the top is VILNIUS - EUROPOS KULTUROS SOSTINĖ, meaning 'Vilnius - a Capital of European Culture'. At the bottom is '2009'.

These coins, as well as other commemoratives, are available from the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago.

## WANT/FOR SALE ADS

*This is a FREE service to LNA members. List your items here!*

**WANTED:** Picture postcards of Lithuania, Klaipėda/Memel, pre-1941 only. Send photocopies or description with price to: J. R. Greene, 26 Bearsden Road, Athol, MA 01331.

**WANTED:** Lithuanian coins prior to 1708, especially gold. Please send me a list of what you have for my generous offer. Tony Tumonis, P.O. Box 89792, Tucson, AZ 85752. E-mail: lith57@aol.com.

**WANTED:** Lithuanian 1923 First National Census badge. Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St., Albion, MI 49224. E-mail: albionpf@hotmail.com.

**WANTED:** High grade early Lithuanian (pre-WWII) banknotes for personal collection. Robert Pletta, P.O. Box 480, Friendsville, MD 21531-0480. E-mail: rpletta@gcnetmail.net.

**FOR SALE:** DOUBLE DIE 1936 silver Vytautas the Great 10 litų: #2 obverse and #4 reverse. Both \$55 each, XF

condition. Frank Passic, 9000 S. Eaton St., Albion, MI 49224, E-mail: albionfp@hotmail.com.

**FOR SALE:** Various Lithuanian silver 50 litų commemorative coins. CALL or E-mail us for what we have and prices. Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture Gift Shop, 6500 S. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60629. Phone: (773) 583-6500, E-mail: giftshop@lithuanianmuseum.org.

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Subscription/membership to Volume 31 (5 issues) a donation of \$25 or more. Write: Alex Radžius, Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 22696, Baltimore, MD 21203. E-mail: a.radzius@yahoo.com.

**EDITOR'S ADDRESS:** Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St., Albion MI 49224. E-mail: albionfp@hotmail.com or lithnumis@hotmail.com.

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**FOR BACK ISSUES:** Write Šarūnas Mingėla, 46707 Stratford Court, Northville, MI 48167.